

**R E M A R K S**

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

**RE: THE ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER**

The Examiner's indication of the allowability of the subject matter of claims 3, 5-8 and 11 is respectfully acknowledged.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 2 and 3.

In addition, claims 1, 5-8 and 11 have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as to put them in better form for issuance in a U.S. patent. All of the informalities pointed out by the Examiner have been corrected.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

And it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1, 5-8 and 11 are now all in condition for immediate allowance.

**RE: CLAIMS 4 and 12**

Claim 4 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2 and to recite the feature of the present invention whereby the spanning tree protocol instance of one of the

plurality of virtual LANs corresponding to a received BPDU is identified by determining a VLAN-ID of a port at which the received BPDU is received and comparing the VLAN-ID of the port with the VLAN-ID of the spanning tree protocol instance, as shown in Fig. 5 (step S5) and as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 31, lines 5-13.

In addition, claim 4 has been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as to put them in better form for issuance in a U.S. patent. All of the informalities pointed out by the Examiner have been corrected.

Still further, new apparatus claim 12 has been prepared to correspond to amended method claim 4.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to claim 4 and the addition of claim 12 be approved and entered.

It is respectfully submitted, moreover, that none of the cited references disclose, teach or suggest the feature of the present invention recited in claims 4 and 12 whereby the spanning tree protocol instance of one of the plurality of virtual LANs corresponding to a received BPDU is identified by determining a VLAN-ID of a port at which the received BPDU is received and comparing the VLAN-ID of the port with the VLAN-ID of the spanning tree protocol instance.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4 and 12 patentably distinguish over all of the cited references, along with allowable claims 1, 5-8 and 11, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

RE: THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 1, 2, 4A, 5 and 6 have been amended as described hereinabove to correct some minor informalities of which the undersigned has become aware, including the informalities pointed out by the Examiner.

Submitted herewith are corrected sheets of formal drawings which incorporate the amendments and annotated sheets showing the changes made thereto.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

\* \* \* \* \*

In view of the foregoing, entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

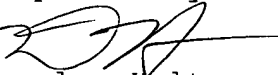
If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the

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Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt  
action.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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DH:db  
encs.

**Amendments to the Drawings:**

Fig. 1 has been amended to replace PORT 3, PORT 4 and PORT 5 with PORT 2, PORT 3 and PORT 4, respectively, as required by the Examiner, as well as to correct the spelling of "HELLO."

Fig. 2 has been amended to correct "BPODU" to "BPDU."

Fig. 4A has been amended to correct the spelling of "HELLO."

Fig. 5 has been amended to change "IF" to "OF."

And Fig. 6 has been amended to change "BODU" to "BPDU."

Attachment:     Annotated Sheet Showing Changes  
                  Replacement Sheet

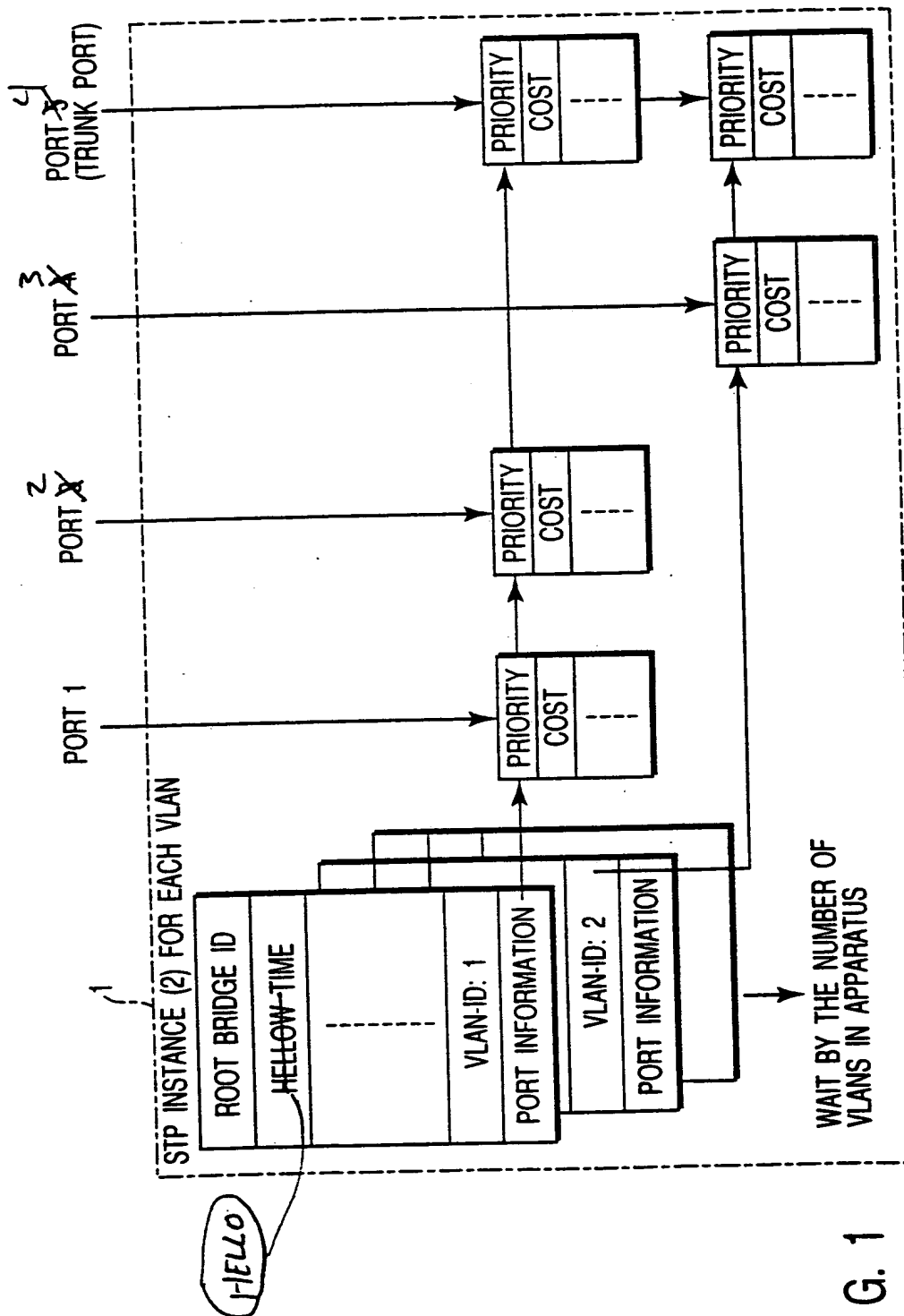


FIG. 1

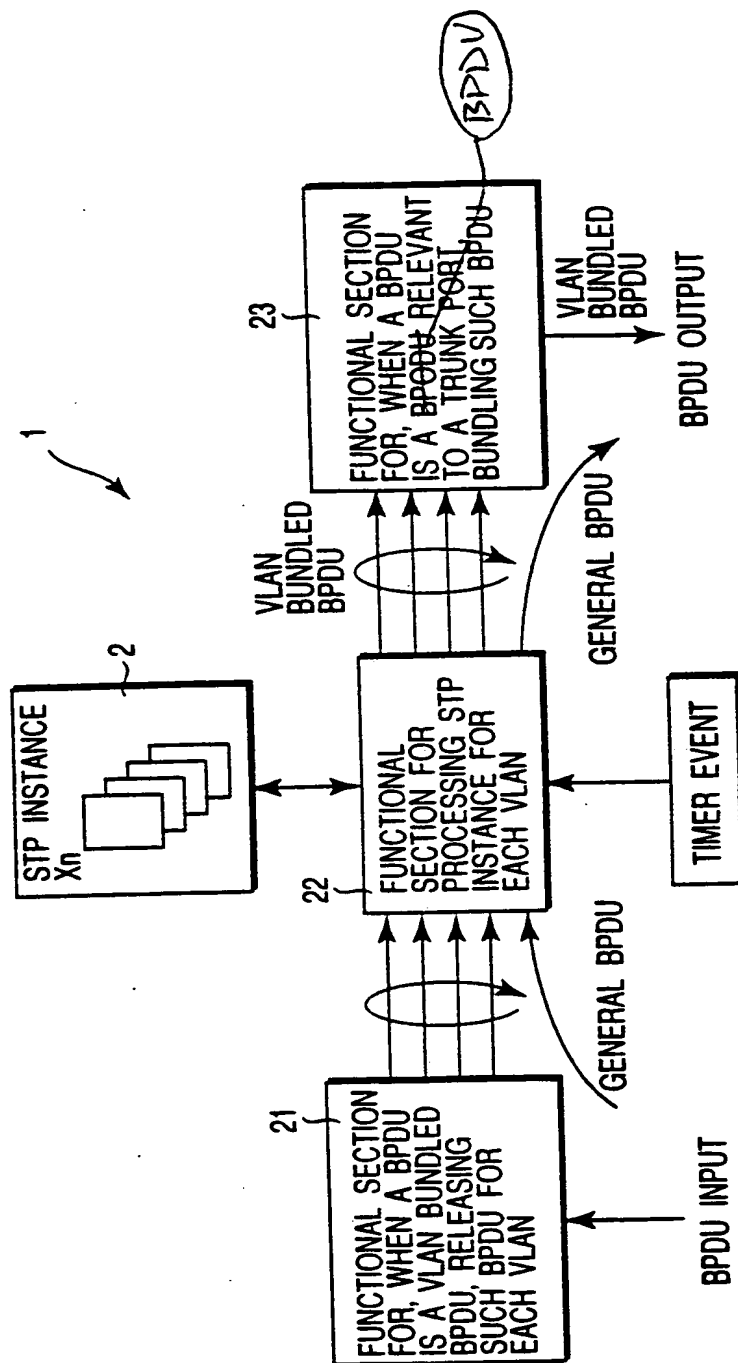


FIG. 2

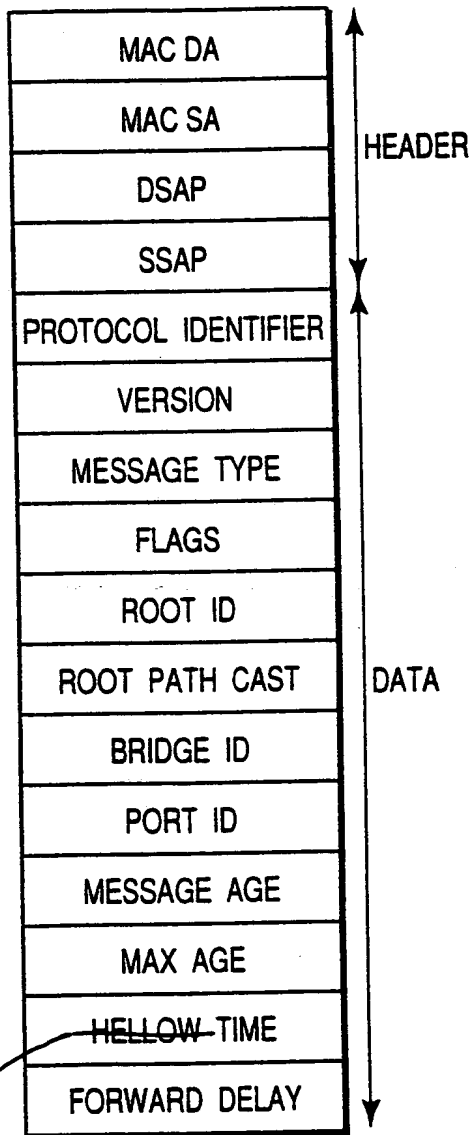


FIG. 4A

HELLO

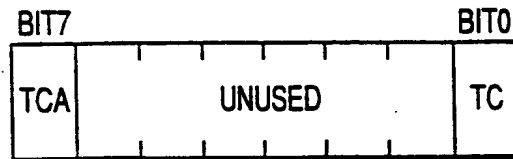


FIG. 4B

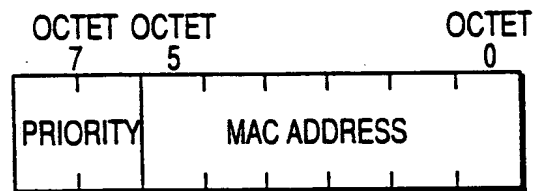


FIG. 4C

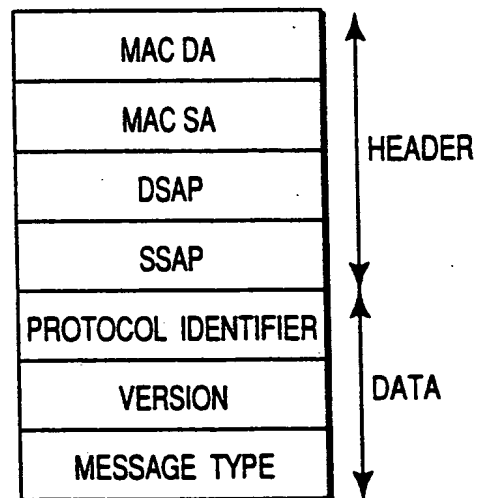


FIG. 4D



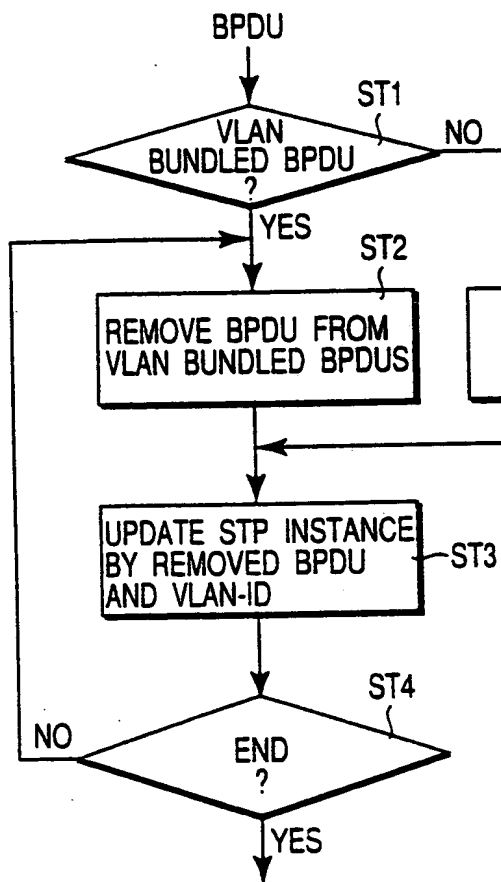


FIG. 5

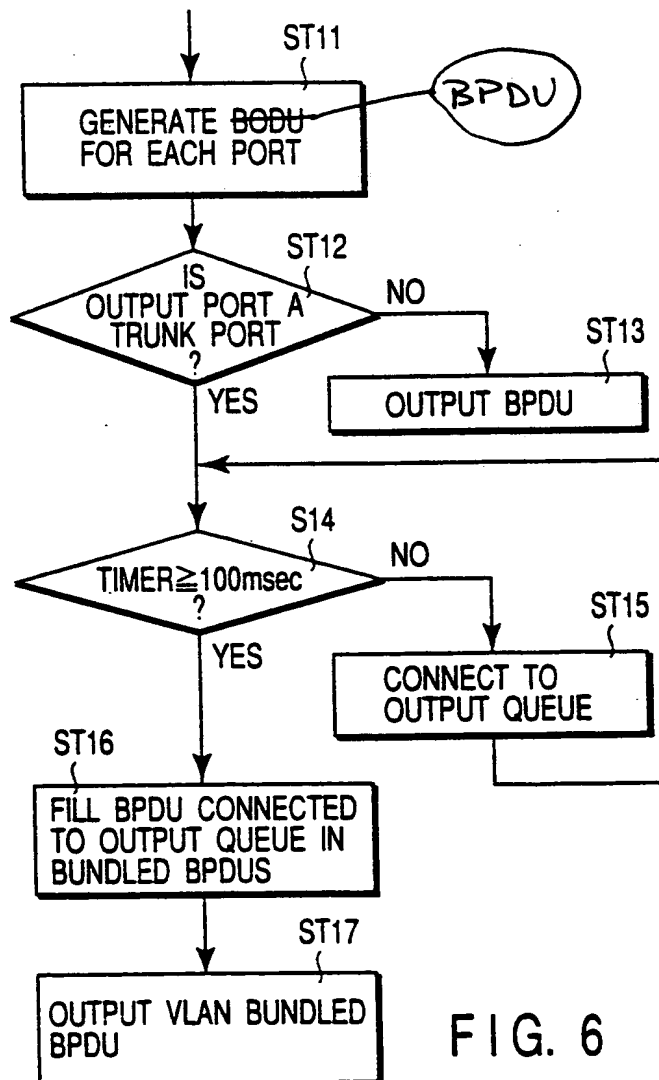


FIG. 6